

MIKLE, Donald E.

DCFN

USN

USS BENNINGTON (CVA-20)

Rhode Island

RECOMMENDED: (SECNAV) LETTER OF COMMENDATION on CO USS BENNINGTON ltr ser 5025 of 8/26/54. Rec'd Bd D&M 12/14/54

AWARDED: (SECNAV) LETTER OF COMMENDATION (WITHOUT RIBBON) by Sp Bd D&M Mtg, Ser 2 of 4 Jan '55. App SecNav 8 Jan 1955.

“For courageous action and performance beyond the call of duty in connection with the disastrous explosions and fires which occurred on the BENNINGTON while he was serving in the Engineering Dept. On 26 May '54, the BENNINGTON was conducting air operations 75 miles south of Newport, RI, when the ship experienced a series of violent explosions that spread flame, flash fires, intense heat and dense smoke throughout the forward section of the ship causing death and injury to 220 officers and men. Fully aware of the danger involved but without regard for his own safety MIKLE entered a most critical area where smoke, debris, and threat of further explosions existed to assist in the removal of casualties. He entered the Officer's Wardroom on two separate occasions and removed dead and injured personnel. His courageous and untiring efforts were instrumental in removing casualties in a most expeditious manner and thereby undoubtedly resulted in the saving of lives. His actions were in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service.”